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challenge



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Gov't Guesstimates Jobs: RACIST UNEMPLOYMENT STILL RAMPANT

The Bush administration and the media have been flooding us with reports of the creation of hundreds of thousands of new jobs. It seems the government is constantly juggling numbers to come up with an "accurate" (and lower) unemployment total, which is always off the mark.

Lately big job gains are being reported by the Labor Department. However, this flies in the face of workers "still reporting...difficulty finding full-time work." (NY Post, 6/8)

One reason for this difficulty could be that job growth is not all what it's cracked up to be. "Right now," according to N.Y. Post Business Page writer John Crudele (6/8) "most of the growth...is coming from new companies the government *thinks* — *but can't prove* — are being created." [Our emphasis — Ed.] While revisions in calculations were made in 1991 after "massive mistakes concerning jobs and wages" were discovered (including the double-counting of new jobs), Crudele says "Washington is still guessing at the number of jobs in this country.... Polls show voters aren't very optimistic about the economy despite the jobs figures."

"I don't think he [Bush] has created anything," Lonnie Steele, 57, of East Flat Rock, N.C. told the Associated Press (6/14) in a report entitled, "Voters don't think Bush has created a million jobs."

Even the latest "optimistic" government reports show unemployment of black workers rose in May to nearly 10% because of racist unemployment while the jobless rate for all workers remained at 5.6%. As CHALLENGE has shown previously, the true rate is probably double that, given all the categories the government excludes from its count.

This is now further confirmed by a Reuters dispatch reporting the U.S. government's "alternative measure...[of] the hidden unemployed,...not included in the official unemployment rate."

That rate "is dramatically higher, at 9.7% in May, compared with the official...5.6%. That's an extra 5.96 million, in addition to the 8.2 million 'officially' unemployed..." This adds in "workers who have not actually looked for work in the past four

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Bushites' Iraq Fiasco:

BIG BOSSES NEED KERRY TO SAVE OIL EMPIRE



U.S. rulers are answering nationalist and fundamentalist threats to their Mid-East oil empire in typical capitalist fashion, with indiscriminate murder. On June 15, anti-U.S. insurgents shut down all crude exports from Iraq by blowing up pipelines feeding its southern oil terminal. Sabotage earlier had stopped shipments from northern fields. So, on June 19, "a U.S. military plane fired missiles...into a residential neighborhood in Fallujah, killing at least 20 and leveling houses.... Outraged residents accused the Americans of trying to inflict maximum damage by firing two strikes — one first to attack and another to kill the rescuers. 'The number of casualties is so high because after the first missile we jumped to rescue the victims,' said Wissam Ali Hamad. 'The second missile killed those trying to carry out the rescue.'" (Associated Press, 6/19) Meanwhile, liberal critics of Bush's war-making, those close

to the Exxon Mobil-Chevron Texaco-Shell-BP axis, are calling for a Kerry administration to send an even more deadly U.S. force to Iraq.

Control of the Mid-East's oil gives U.S. rulers such great profits and leverage over their competition that they will stop at nothing to keep it. They invaded Iraq hoping to seize its oil fields from the pro-Russian and pro-French Saddam Hussein. They wanted to boost production from a pre-1990 2.5 million barrels per day to six million, as Philip Carroll, the former Shell boss who governed Iraq just after the U.S. "victory," once boasted.

A U.S.-controlled Iraq with the capacity to pump at that level could have become the main "swing producer." U.S. oil firms could then have set world prices, broken OPEC and hedged threats to their mother lode of oil, Saudi Arabia [see box]. But today's zero barrels a day is a lot less than the dreamed-of six million. Oil bosses

are furious at Bush for not putting enough GI boots on the ground in Iraq to wipe out U.S. opponents and secure the oil infrastructure. "There has to be basic security, a stable government," Carroll lamented. (Bloomberg, 6/18) And in a gross understatement, Stratfor, an influential policy analysis outfit, says Exxon Mobil chairman Lee Raymond "is not thrilled with the Bush administration's approach to foreign policy," (6/8)

Liberals, aiding the oil barons, demand more U.S. killing power. Writing for the liberal Brookings Institution (6/4), military analyst Michael O'Hanlon says "success in Iraq [that is, maintaining a U.S. stranglehold on its oil] is too important to allow the present size of the U.S. Army to predetermine our options for deploying troops there.... The only conscionable response is to increase the size of the U.S.

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Big Bosses Need Kerry To Save Oil Empire

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ground forces.... No more time should be lost — about 40,000 more troops, mostly Army soldiers but perhaps some Marines as well, should be added to the U.S. military.” But O’Hanlon warns that low recruitment “could leave the country with few choices besides a return to the draft, with its even greater problems of a much less proficient and committed military.”

Bush’s mishandling of Iraq is fueling an unprecedented elect-Kerry movement among high-ranking foreign service and

military officers, who traditionally have steered clear of electoral politics. On June 16, a newly-formed group called Diplomats and Military Commanders for Change issued a statement at the National Press Club in Washington. In it, 27 former ambassadors, generals and admirals said they were “deeply concerned by the damage the Bush Administration has caused to our national and international interests.” Liberal Jimmy Carter long ago identified these “interests” as the U.S.’s ability to dominate other nations militarily and economi-



PLP contingent at June 5th anti-war rally in San Francisco

Bin Laden Challenges Exxon

In the most lucrative and strategically important business deal on earth, Saudi Arabia sells Exxon Mobil (and some others) vast amounts of cheap crude oil on secret terms. It’s mainly the Saudi Aramco connection that allows Exxon to sell over 8 million barrels a day of petroleum products, while it pumps only 2.5 million barrels of crude from its own wells. When Saudi royals nationalized Aramco in 1976, they, unlike Iran and Iraq, didn’t expel their American partners, Exxon, Mobil, Chevron, and Texaco. According to Anthony Cave Brown in “Oil, God, and Gold” (Houghton Mifflin, 1999, p. 361), “The American[s] would have access to seven million barrels of crude oil per day...at forty-seven cents per barrel.” The going rate then was \$11. The would-be oil barons of al Qaeda seek to overthrow this sweetheart arrangement, which continues in some form today. According to Exxon Mobil president Rex Tillerson, “We are the largest purchaser of Saudi crude oil exports — making Saudi Arabia the single largest supplier of raw materials to Exxon Mobil’s worldwide refinery system.” (Exxon Mobil press release, 4/27)

Wanting the oil profits for themselves, bin Laden’s thugs have a strategy of scaring the more than 30,000 U.S. nationals out of Saudi Arabia, for whom they now provide oil industry and military expertise. Al Qaeda’s recent beheading of a U.S. military contractor caused many to flee. But U.S. rulers won’t let their Saudi oil bonanza go without a major war. If al Qaeda threatens to seize power, the U.S. rulers’ response will make their Iraqi slaughter look like a picnic.✪

cally, especially with the oil weapon.

Many of the signers belong to the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a liberal policy factory closely tied to the Exxon Mobil-Rockefeller wing of U.S. capital. Two — Charles Freeman, ex-ambassador to Saudi Arabia, and General Joseph Hoar — participated in a 1997 CFR study laying out a blueprint for a post-war Iraq *six years before* the U.S. invaded. Another, ex-CIA chief Admiral Stansfield Turner, recently lectured CFR members on the need for a police state in the U.S.: “We are going to have to integrate the policeman on the motorcycle in Montana with the domestic spying done by the FBI or an MI5 [Britain’s secret police], and it’s going to be a very big operation.” (CFR transcript, 5/4)

These Kerry backers — just like the Bushites — have the blood of millions of workers on their hands. Their interests lie in advancing U.S. imperialism, no matter what the cost in human lives. Jumping on their Kerry bandwagon, as an alternative to Bush’s butchery, would only strengthen the U.S. war machine.

Instead of participating in the rulers’ electoral circus, we should organize against all bosses and build Progressive Labor Party to destroy their system, replacing it with a communist society that has no class interest in war, unemployment, racism and poverty.✪

RACIST UNEMPLOYMENT STILL RAMPANT

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weeks, including ‘discouraged workers’ who have given up altogether. They also include those who have given up looking for full-time jobs and have settled for part-time work....”

“None of the unemployment measures include the 1.7% of the male wage-earning population who are in prison, or another 1.36 million men....” (Reuters, 6/14)

In addition, to this 14.1 million, also excluded are people on welfare who can’t find jobs and those youth who joined the military because they couldn’t find work.

But there is still further fraud in the government’s figures. Crudele reports from the government’s own website (www.bis.gov/web/web/cesbd.htm) that, “Of the 248,000 jobs that Washington says sprang into existence in May..., 195,000 materialized from...guesstimate[s]. The same thing happened in April (with

270,000 jobs just a guess) and March (153,000 guess).” A top economist at the Labor Department says it won’t know until “this time next year whether the figure [the 195,000 guess] is accurate.”

Furthermore, the N.Y. Times reports (6/11) that in the first quarter of 2004, “4.5 million workers...applied for unemployment insurance.” However, slightly fewer than 40% of U.S. workers are actually eligible for these benefits. This is 40% of a possible total of 11.5 million jobless.

Unemployment is inherent to capitalism. In a planless economy in which every company tries to capture as big a section of the market as possible, overproduction is inevitable. Those companies who lose in this struggle are driven to reduce labor costs — layoffs — to try to maintain profits. The only way to eliminate unemployment is to eliminate the profit system that creates it.✪

Fight ‘Outsourcing’ with International Workers’ Unity

Much has been made of job losses in the U.S. due to outsourcing jobs overseas. The latest Labor Department figures for the first quarter of 2004 showed 16,000 layoffs because of relocation of jobs, of which 60% (9,600) moved to another part of the U.S.; only 4,633 went abroad. But, then again this doesn’t include companies with less than 50 employees or larger companies where less than 50 actually applied for unemployment benefits. Wall Street’s Goldman Sachs, including the smaller firms, estimates outsourcing overseas of 250,000 to 300,000 per year, although still a small part of a labor market of 130 million.

But whatever the figure, workers finding new jobs after being laid off because of this outsourcing are earning \$2 an hour less, on average. (Miami Herald, 6/12) Based on a 40-hour week, that’s \$80 weekly or over \$4,000 less per year. These U.S. workers are suffering as a direct result of U.S. imperialism and racism. U.S. bosses ship jobs overseas seeking cheaper labor, then use racism to blame these “foreign” workers for the job losses, and then pay U.S. workers thousands less in their new jobs (if they can find any). Thus, imperialism super-exploits workers overseas and its racism helps to lower wages here.

Only the unity of workers internationally can fight this world capitalist attack on all workers and prevent the bosses from pitting groups of workers against each other. And only communist revolution can finish off the system that causes this worldwide suffering.✪

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

✪PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of the profit system, like wages and divisions of labor.

✪Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

✪Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society’s benefits and burdens.

✪Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

✪Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

✪Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✪Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!



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NEA Teachers' Lesson Plan: Fight Racism, Imperialist War

The National Education Association, the country's largest union, is holding its annual convention of 10,000 delegates in Washington, D.C. this July. Like other union gatherings this summer, the NEA convention will likely become a campaign rally promoting John Kerry for President. We should reject both Kerry and Bush and the capitalism they represent. Instead we should fight for a system that puts workers' needs first, a system based on cooperation and production for need, not profits.

We will work with others backing resolutions which condemn torture in prisons in the U.S. Afghanistan and in Iraq, and expose Kerry's plans for national service as a cover for bringing back the military draft. We plan to organize among the thousands of NEA delegates who are opposed to war and fascist torture, and to win them to see that instead of supporting the Democrats, the only real alternative to the evils of capitalism is communist revolution.

Teachers are painfully aware that the students we educate face a world of rising unemployment, restricted opportunities, reduced benefits, mayhem, jail and war. The schools themselves have become racist

institutions in which declining attention is paid to black and Latin students, dragging down the education of white working-class students as well. This is a world based on the exploitation of workers, where oil is a curse, not a blessing and whose "leaders" use nationalism and religion to win workers and youth to fight wars and kill other workers to benefit the fabulously wealthy. But teachers are in a position to educate these students and their parents about the causes of these problems — and what we can do about them.

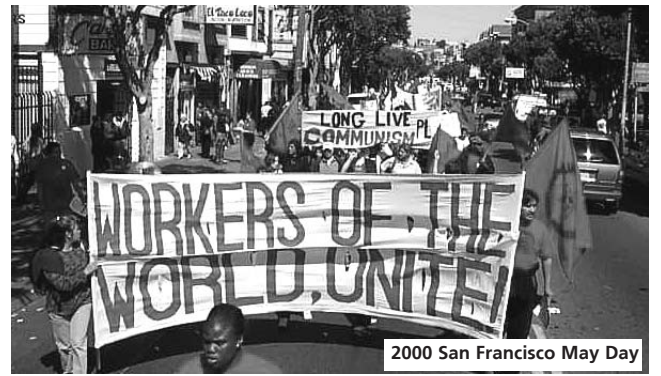
U.S. capitalists have a problem trying to maintain their economic dominance. European, Chinese and other imperialists are beginning to challenge the U.S., over the war in Iraq and with the rising importance of the European Union's currency (the euro) and its threat to the dollar as payment for the world's oil. The main section of the U.S. ruling class is upset with the way Bush has met this challenge. His huge tax cuts for the rich have short-changed their military. Of course, it has also decreased spending on social services such as health care and education.

Now the Rockefeller wing wants to

dump Bush so John Kerry can "do it right," meaning his call for 40,000 more troops in Iraq and unity with others to help pay the price of conquest.

Kerry seeks to reinstitute the draft, calling for a program of National Service (www.JohnKerry.com) with options for strengthening the Patriot Act — a Police Corps and the creation of a new community defense service to work for the government — and for recruiting more soldiers through National Service with options for the military. He describes it as "the highest form of service." He would reward this service with Pell grants for college. This follows the "United We Serve" task force recommendation that the Pell Grant be tied to national service.

No matter what form military recruitment takes, working-class young people will serve in the rulers' wars. Teachers giving them a critical perspective and class consciousness can help our students — future workers and soldiers — understand



that they can unite with other workers worldwide, rather than seeing them as their enemy.

The issues in the schools and at the NEA convention must be seen in light of the events described above. The real question is whether we should support the exploitation, profits-before-people, racism, sexism, nationalism and wars of the rulers' imperialist system at all or whether we should fight to overthrow it and replace it with a communist system based on cooperation, production for use, internationalism and people first, last and always. ☛

N.J. Pickets Oppose U.S. Rulers' Torture

NEWARK, NJ — On June 3, a militant group of people from mass organizations around the city picketed the Federal Building protesting the U.S. military's horrific torture of prisoners at Abu Gharib prison in Iraq. Several drivers honked their horns in support as they passed Broad Street reading signs like: "U.S. Biggest Terrorist" and heard the rousing chants: "Money for Jobs, Not for War!" and "Hey, Hey, Ho Ho, Racist War Has Got to Go!"

Speeches from demonstrators denounced U.S. imperialism, including the tortures at Abu Gharib as part of the U.S. racist campaign for world domination of markets. One speaker related the torture to the Patriot Act's racist treatment of Arab workers in the U.S. under which the government interrogates, imprisons and deports them as well as quelling and silencing dissent here.

Many workers grabbed leaflets and others bought CHALLENGES, agreeing with the demonstrators' politics against the war in Iraq. Some said they didn't trust any politicians anymore and agreed that maybe we do need a new system. Right now we need mass demonstrations, resolutions in union, churches and other mass organizations denouncing this torture and opposing the U.S. ruling class that orders it. Friends and comrades of PLP must spread the message to workers worldwide that the working class needs to make revolution against the war-makers and build a society based on the dictatorship of the working class! ☛



Organizing Sailors to Become Working-Class Political Leaders

In a previous CHALLENGE article (4/14) I detailed my positive experience with sailors in boot camp. Now for my progress with sailors/marines in post-boot camp, which has emboldened me even more. The key is to get my buddies involved in our work on a practical level so it doesn't come off simply as theory but as an actual struggle that can be won — if we're consistent and on the ball. Here's some practical involvement which has brought sailors/marines closer to our Party and its view that working-class soldiers and sailors don't have to become torturers like those in Abu Ghraib or Guantanamo.

A chapter of a movement of mostly young progressives who fight the expansion of the exploitation of prison labor recently held a film festival. I invited several colleagues to join me, two sailors and one marine. On the way to the event one stressed that the black people's fight today in the U.S. today is for acceptance, for them to be able wear their dreadlocks to work, and so on. I challenged this, saying America today is more than willing to accept us if we're willing to serve imperialism. I suggested he look more closely at urban police departments. In fact, the cop who killed a black University student had dreadlocks.

The first film that night dealt with Palestinian youth kidnapped by Israeli authorities and held against their will. One youth we saw was held in detention for almost a year, abused in prison, beaten, denied schooling and interrogated daily. Another film explored the plight of youth in Vietnam after the Vietnam War, their daily struggle for survival. The last one portrayed the 1992 rebellion against police brutality in a mostly Salvadoran neighborhood. It described why these workers fled to the U.S. (escaping torture and El Salvador death squads funded by Reagan and the CIA). Once here, instead of receiving peace and justice, they suffered unemployment, underemployment, lousy schooling, substandard housing and daily harassment/torture by the cops.

Afterwards, everyone felt quite moved and motivated to struggle over what they'd witnessed. One seemed more concerned with the struggle against police brutality and couldn't see why we cared about Palestine or Vietnam. I stressed the inter-connectedness of U.S. Imperialism/capitalism, how police brutality here is linked to the oppressed Palestinian child, how the U.S. sends billions to the Israeli government. He nodded when I said that in order to win workers' power we

must build solidarity with all workers across all borders! One must expand the fight for your home beyond the nation where you were born to the CLASS you belong to! This is home! The experience was a good one and helped our work.

The following week, the same sailor who challenged our global view traveled with me to an anti-police brutality meeting to hear how the goons — cops — would "reform" themselves through a consent decree negotiated by the U.S. Justice Department. A grassroots group had pressured for this decree. Now we were witnessing how the capitalist state, even on this level, will use a reform movement to strengthen its grip on the working class. We see this nationally with the election of black and Latino politicians, along with black and brown cops.

My Navy buddy felt it was an oxymoron, the police (the feds) monitoring the police. When he raised his hand to question this, he quickly discovered how the police are trained to deceive you into thinking they're "for the people." The representative of the Chief of Police answered that the Federal Justice Department was committed to justice and ensuring that the County police were held accountable. This is the same Justice Department named for J. Edgar Hoover, the notorious FBI director, who — through the infamous Counter Intelligence Program — spied on countless organizations fighting for justice and freedom. My buddy wasn't buying this. Neither were the others present.

Several mothers whose sons were victims of police brutality were angry at a process that gives more deference to the cops than to the victims/survivors forced to bury their sons with no justice! (The Chief's representative told us the police were included in negotiating the consent decree while the community was locked out.)

Both mothers expressed outrage over the fact that the cops who beat and tortured (in one case killed) their sons are still on the force despite the Federal consent decree, the hiring of the first permanent black Police Chief, the election of the second black County Executive, and so on. Many community members now understand that it's the system, not only the police chief or the County Executive, that must be challenged. We in PLP pushed our colleagues to see that the system must be destroyed! (Next issue: celebrating May Day.) ☛

Coke

SWEET FOR BOSSES, EXPLOITING CHILD LABOR IN EL SALVADOR

Coca Cola is having lots of problems which its most recent CEO — like the others before him — couldn't solve. He was forced to resign. This prompted a rare N. Y. Times' editorial (6/18) criticizing the company for doling out hundreds of millions of "shareholders' dollars" to incompetent CEOs. Of course, the Times doesn't worry about the workers who produce these millions. Workers should not take sides with any bosses, but must be concerned with how their profit-making screws us.

Firstly, Coca Cola's products damages the teeth and health of tens of millions of people worldwide. It's not only saturated with sugar and other sweeteners, but it also used to use coca paste (how it got its name), the source of cocaine. Supposedly, coca leaves are no longer used in the U.S. market but they're still part of the product bottled overseas. (For an interesting article on Coca Cola, cocaine, the CIA and Papa Bush's for-

tunes, see www.skolnicsreport.com, April 2004).

But Coke is wreaking havoc in other ways. We've reported on Colombian Coca Cola bottlers employing paramilitary death squads to murder activists in the Coke workers union. Now it appears Coke is using child labor to make super-profits. The UN declared June 12 an International Day Against Child Labor. It's estimated that 200 million children are now super-exploited worldwide. Some try to justify this by saying "cultural" reasons cause parents to bring

"Child labor continues because it's very profitable, both for the plantation owners and for the corporations that buy the sugar they produce"

their children to work, particularly in agriculture in the world's poorest countries. But this also occurs in the U.S. and European agri-business, where migrant

labor (mostly undocumented immigrant workers) is common. Parents feel forced to bring their children along to augment the family's meager poverty wages paid by exploiting bosses.

In El Salvador, child labor is commonly used in cutting sugar cane. One-third of the country's sugar cane workers are under 18, many of whom began working when they were 8 (according to a 6/14 Human Rights Watch report (Argenpress.info)). The ILO (Int'l Labor Organization) estimates that from 5,000 to 30,000 children under 18 participate in what it calls "dangerous work" in El Salvador's sugar cane fields. The ILO has a group there fighting for the immediate end to this child labor. But calling on capitalists to end it won't do the trick, another reason why PLP organizes for communist revolution to destroy capitalism, a system based on all forms of wage slavery.

"Dangerous work" means the children must use machetes and other sharp objects to cut the sugar cane and root out the leaves, laboring nine hours a

day in unbearable heat. There are many "accidents," but basically it's up to the workers to find medical help. Official figures show 22,000 children die worldwide because of "industrial accidents." But the real number is far higher.

Child labor continues because it's very profitable, both for the plantation owners and for the corporations that buy the sugar they produce. One of the biggest beneficiaries of this super-exploitation's final product — sugar — is Coca Cola. The local Coke bottler buys sugar from Central Izalco, El Salvador's biggest sugar mill. At least four of the plantations supplying Izalco use child labor. Of course, Coke has an international "code" forbidding child labor, but it only covers direct suppliers, not the plantations. Obviously the code is worthless.

Millions of children are also being used to wage imperialist wars for one boss or another, whose armies are predominantly youth. After years of civil war, "peace" has brought nothing but more deaths and misery to the workers and youth of El Salvador (including drug-dealing gangs trained in the U.S.). The leaders of the former FMLN guerrillas have now turned into electoral politicians, selling out the hundreds of thousands who died and fought the U.S. death-squad lackey rulers. For our children's sake, let's fight to destroy capitalism once and for all, for a society without Coke and bosses and their sell-out politicians, where all the children can be children. Join the communist PLP and end this living hell. ☸

IMPERIALIST BATTLE OVER LATIN AMERICA SHOWS NEED TO BUILD MASS PLP — Part I

As PLP has often pointed out, the main contradiction in the world today is inter-imperialist rivalry. This rivalry, driven by economic laws integral to capitalism, inexorably leads to more and wider wars, and eventually, as Lenin wrote, to world war. Therefore communists learn capitalism's economic trends to enable us to alert the working class of the impending dangers and be better prepared to turn the imperialist war into a class war for communist revolution.

Economic laws dictate capitalist crisis, fascism and wars. Only when communist revolution is spread worldwide, destroying capitalism itself, will these horrors end. This won't happen spontaneously, but only by PLP fighting hard and skillfully for its ideas among all workers, youth and soldiers.

The collapse of the state-capitalist Soviet Union's empire left the U.S. as the dominant imperialist power. But it also opened the gates to fierce inter-imperialist rivalry by eliminating the threat that forged unity among the western imperialists. The European Union (EU), having become one of the U.S. rulers' main contenders for world hegemony, is attacking U.S. supremacy economically and politically, globally and regionally — and is making advances.

This process has its twist and turns, its ups and downs, but the trend points to the decline of U.S. supremacy as the number one imperialist. It isn't, and won't be, a peaceful process. The many armed conflicts in the world reflect this inter-imperialist dogfight. Eventually, the major imperialists will clash on the battlefield.

U.S. bosses won't surrender Latin America or the rest of its empire peacefully. In 1962, they came very close to nuclear war over tiny Cuba. Hundreds of thousands were murdered in Central America to protect the U.S. control of the region from pro-Soviet and pro-European forces like El Salvador's FMLN and Nicaragua's Sandinistas. The U.S. invaded Panama to stop Noriega from making the Japanese yen that country's main currency. Under the guise of the "war on terror and drugs," the U.S. has established more military bases across Latin America.

These sharpening contradictions among the imperialists don't mean World War III will start tomorrow but simply that it, and more wars, are inevitable. Presently none of the U.S. rulers' rivals are ready or willing to challenge the U.S. militarily, but that's just a question of time. They'll be propelled by these sharpening external and internal contradictions. European bosses are grappling with the development of their military, and with their future relationship with Russia and China, both nuclear powers. They certainly realize there can't be multi-lateralism without military backing. Having fought two wars for world supremacy, they must know that fulfilling this ambition will require another one.

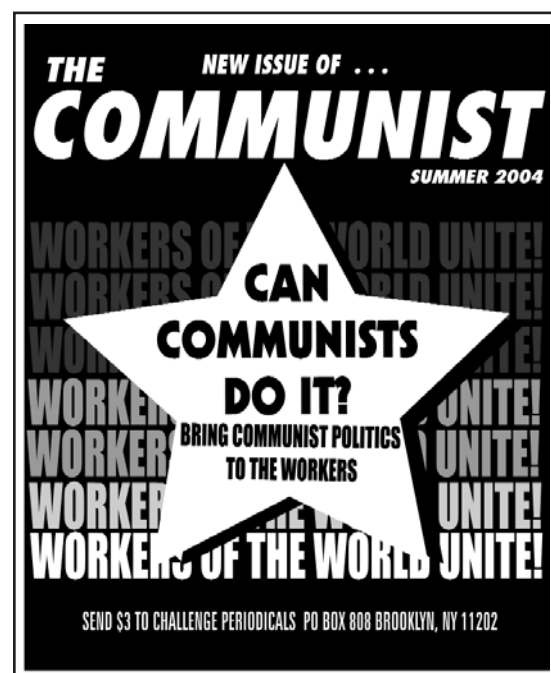
LACEU SUMMIT CHALLENGED U.S. RULERS ON THREE FRONTS

The recent summit of Latin American, Caribbean and European (LACEU) rulers in

Guadalajara, Mexico, further intensified this power struggle. The EU imperialists outlined their strategy on three fronts to challenge U.S. world hegemony with "Euro-globalism." The first was political, calling for a return to multi-lateralism among the industrialized nations in the decision-making process of world affairs.

The second front was economic. It called for regional integration, multi-lateralism in the regulation of the world economy and the creation of an EU that could compete with the U.S. in international markets. To reduce U.S. hegemony in this hemisphere, the summit decided to officially sign next October the free trade agreement between the EU and MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay), to which Mexico has applied for membership.

The third front was the social one. The European butchers want to portray themselves to the world's workers as benign imperialists, while attacking U.S. policies that guarantee its hegemony in Latin America and elsewhere. They say they favor creating organizations that promote "fairer income redistribution" globally and that protect the environment and human rights. The EU funds many Non-Governmental Organizations and mass movements in the Latin America — Caribbean area, that attack U.S. policies on all these fronts, especially against the U.S. free-market globalization and the creation of



the U.S.-sponsored FTAA (Free Trade Agreement of the Americas).

Workers shouldn't fall for this trick. Capitalism produces for profits. No imperialist/capitalist will ever put the well-being of workers above the bosses' class interests. This condemns billions of people to abject poverty and to death from starvation and curable deceases. They have needs, but no money. Communism, on the other hand, means production for human needs. There won't be anything for sale, or money to buy it. Society will produce to fulfill all the needs of the international working class.

(Next issue, the intensification of European penetration into Latin America.) ☸

\$10/Hr Still Poverty Wages for Home Health Care Workers

BROOKLYN, NY, June 21 — “We were sold out! The home health care agencies and the 1199-SEIU leadership are good for nothing!” declared a striking home health care worker upon hearing that they had “won” \$10 an hour by 2007.

On June 7, several of us workers from a Brooklyn hospital joined the picket line in solidarity with strikers. Many CHALLENGES were sold to this militant group of underpaid workers.

Local 1199-SEIU had called a three-day strike beginning on June 7 for these 25,000 workers. Almost all of the workers’ contracts had expired; others had never even had one. The union demands included vacation, sick and bereavement leaves, health coverage and a \$10 hourly wage.

Thousands of workers showed up to picket on the strike’s first day. Many were chanting for more money, that \$10 was unacceptable. The bosses’ politicians’ message at the rally was how evil Bush is and how good capitalism and “democracy” is for everyone.

At 9 AM, the union leadership reported some agencies had settled and that the workers should return to work. The workers immediately raised their hands and shouted angrily, “No way! We’re not going back!”

The 1199 SEIU leadership, seeing the workers’ defiance, quickly called a vote. The strikers’ position to stay out won overwhelmingly. They continued picketing and also marched through midtown Manhattan, snarling traffic for hours.

Over the next two days, many workers did return to work, following an agreement with several agencies. The

union leadership was, and continues to be, very passive. They aim to get out the vote for the bosses’ Democratic Party politicians and get workers to accept any and all rotten contract deals.

Many agencies still haven’t settled. The new contract will have little impact on the workers’ lives. Under capitalism, it’s practically impossible for such workers to feed, clothe and house their families under these wage-rates.

The home health care workers, mostly immigrant women, provide compassionate care in homes of people discharged from hospitals. The bosses’ home health care system is based upon agencies netting enormous profits from low-paid workers.

Medicare and Medicaid finance the system, from workers’ taxes and bosses’ profit extracted from the working class. The funds are channeled through “certified home health care agencies.”

They subcontract to “licensed home care service agencies.” After paying high administrative costs and siphoning off huge profits of the \$17 an hour paid to the agencies what’s left is trickled down to pay workers \$7 an hour.

Since U.S. rulers are spending billions of dollars of our money on their war in Iraq, even less remains for social service programs. The bosses are out to reduce the cost of health care and drive down workers’ wages. We must organize the working class to build the PLP around the revolutionary communist ideas in the CHALLENGE and through PLP’s 2004 summer project. ☸

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SEIU Pushes Kerry But Workers Respond to PLP’s Red Ideas

San Francisco, June 22 — At an SEIU march for health care here, the union shirts were red, but the message they carried — “Laborers for Kerry” — was not. Allying with Democratic politicians, the union had printed thousands of stickers reading, “I am a health care voter.” It was a clear push to vote for Kerry.

Meanwhile, a committed group of communists from Progressive Labor Party hoisted a banner with a sharply different message: “Capitalism kills workers every day! It will never provide decent health care for all workers! From S.F. to Baghdad, the fight for real health-care is the fight for communism!” A large majority of the workers who we spoke with agreed the Democrats were dangerous. Many bought CHALLENGES. Ten workers gave contact information on the spot.

Clearly SEIU members are not firmly committed to the Democratic Party. This is good news because, as CHALLENGE has consistently pointed out, Kerry and the Democrats are 100% for the imperialist war for oil in Iraq. Democrats like Clinton have launched some of the most vicious attacks on the working class in recent times, such as the huge increase in imprisonment and the destruction of welfare. While the SEIU contributed \$13 million to the Democratic Party over the past four years, the overall trend for workers conditions was down, down, down.

This is a critical time. While the SEIU’s membership is not highly committed to the “social-fascist” (so-called “lesser-evil” but still fascist) Democratic Party, they haven’t reached the level of attacking the Democrats and adopting revolutionary ideas. But their openness to PLP members at the march demonstrates that when PLP exposes social-fascism, workers are interested.

PLP will approach these contacts to promote the understanding that workers need a political solution “outside the box” of capitalism — that the only solution is communist revolution. Unions will never fight for communism — but that doesn’t mean communists won’t fight in unions. Communists and their allies will remain in unions and student-labor groups to fight against the system while advancing the need for revolution.

While PLP makes this fight, organizations like SEIU are training their own leaders. After the march, SEIU kicked off a youth conference for this purpose. There, PLP members met several young people friendly to PLP’s communist analysis. (Details next issue.) ☸



Imperialist Rivalry Peaks in Nepal

Nepal used to be known as an idyllic Himalayan Shangri-La, a paradise for mountain climbers and hippies. Well, very few people refer to Nepal that way now. It’s a microcosm mirroring the rivalry among the world’s large and small imperialists.

Life was never a paradise for Nepal’s peasants and workers. The so-called “Democratic Monarchy” created in 1990 didn’t represent most of the people. This contradiction exploded when a Maoist group (CPN-Maoist) began an armed struggle against the government. Then several years ago they halted their rebellion and joined talks with the government.

But this didn’t last long; the rulers were using the negotiations to their own advantage. Amid all this, the royal family was almost wiped out by one of their own. The new king who took power wasn’t content with being a figurehead, ruling as an autocrat and limiting bourgeois democracy.

The Maoists returned to armed struggle, spread throughout Nepal as well as spilling into neighboring India. In May, the Bushites’ war “against terror” reached Nepal, declaring the local Maoists “terrorists.” India, worried about support by local armed groups — and possibly by Pakistan as well — for Nepal’s Maoists, has also stepped up its intervention in Nepal, helping train its Army, supplied with M-16s by the U.S. army, and training by the UK.

Meanwhile, the Nepalese ruling class and its international backers are trying to re-introduce the façade of “bourgeois democracy” to placate the angry masses. They want to draw the fake leftist Unified Marxist-Leninist Party back into a coalition government. By doing this, “Mr. Deuba [the new Primer Minister] would take one big group out of the daily protests on the streets of Kathmandu, the capital,” reports the Financial Times (6/19-20). “The protesters...demand that King Gyanendra stay inside the gilded cage of symbolic power that was built for the monarch by the...1990....constitution.”

Strikes have erupted alongside the daily protests and armed struggle. The “Maoists latest bandh (strike) shut down all Nepal’s schools



and colleges for 12 days, a sign of their growing strength.” (FT)

The rulers have a two-pronged plan for the Maoists: war plus — knowing the limitation of Maoist politics — winning them to join their government. The FT adds that the U.S. and UK want to help “bring the Maoists into the mainstream,” renounce violence and participate in elections. In the past, the Maoists agreed to negotiate with the rulers. Their rebellion now is limited to demanding the abolition of the monarchy and for a “people’s assembly.” They’re not fighting for communism, destroying capitalism and all bosses.

Maoism fights for “new democracy” — a form of state capitalism they would lead. This same line led to the reversal of the communist-led revolution in China.

Internationally, the big backers of Nepal’s Maoists are the RCP Avakianites, the same outfit behind the Not in Our Name group in the U.S. anti-war movement. They basically agree with “Anybody but Bush,” which translates to “elect Kerry”, another warmaker (see editorial page 1).

In today’s world, the imperialists and capitalists are competing ever fiercer for markets, resources and cheap labor, with the entire globe divided among various bosses, the prospect of “peace” and freedom in Nepal is a mirage. Nothing short of fighting for communism is a waste of the lives and militancy of Nepal’s workers and peasants. ☸

LETTERS

U.S. Protectors of Scabs are Torturers In Iraq

The Visteon strikers in Indiana who recently fought security guards and cops (CHALLENGE, 6/24) furnish one more reminder about the role of cops and company goons. On June 8, in New York City, United Federation of Teachers (UFT) president Randi Weingarten spoke at a joint contract rally of the UFT, the firefighters and the NYPD. She praised this as “real solidarity.”

But cops are not workers and the Police Benevolent Association (PBA) is not a union of workers. It’s a fascist group defending cops, particularly when they kill or torture workers and youth (and in NYC, mostly black and Latino workers). If there’s a strike or any real militant workers’ action, the same cops Weingarten praised will attack teachers or any other workers. This rally was another sign of how reactionary and racist labor hacks like Weingarten have become.

On security guards — I don’t know which outfit was used against the Visteon strikers, but many of these private security companies are being used to torture Iraqis. Vance International is a private security group (mercenaries) serving the U.S. military in Iraq. Longtime CHALLENGE readers may remember that Vance attacked striking Pittston miners in 1993, Caterpillar strikers in 1994 and Detroit newspaper strikers in 1995, cracking the skull of one striker.

When professional strike-breakers double as torturers and become the dual enemies of workers internationally, it shows that opposing the war in Iraq represents the class interests of all workers.

A COMRADE

Boycott Cops’ Rally — A Class Act

On June 8, UFT President Randi Weingarten called on all union members to march in solidarity with NYC kkkops and firefighters to “invest in NYC’s Brightest, Bravest and Finest.” Our Party collective decided we should boycott this rally and instead organize something at our own schools.

The UFT chapter leader at my school wrote to all members urging them to march and make the biggest rally yet. He also distributed buttons calling for a fair contract. I responded with a letter to all teachers urging them to boycott the rally. I said that although solidarity and militancy were crucial to the future of the working class, it was wrong to march with the cops; the cops are our class enemy because of the racist way they constantly harass our students; and that at rallies they protect the bosses and arrest protestors. This was the first time I had called on teachers, in a mass way, to oppose the union bosses. I was a little nervous.

The following day many teachers approached me to thank me for having written the letter. Some said they completely agreed. One told me she had never thought about the cops in that way, that I had a good point. I received no negative comments. Although a few teachers went anyway, many didn’t, mainly because of their hatred of the union bosses. Self-critically, it would have been better for me to call for some kind of action, not just a boycott. That could have produced more com-

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Put forward a revolutionary line this summer at the Democratic and Republican Conventions with Progressive Labor Party’s white T-Shirt that reads:



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munist struggle.

RED TEACHER

All Workers Must Back Mideast Masses

U.S. imperialism is decaying. In the long term it will be defeated. The images of torture in Iraq are rapidly shattering the already flimsy image of U.S. “democracy,” in the Arab world and elsewhere. Arab rulers, either allied or conflicted with the U.S. still helped sustain it in the 1991 Gulf War, but have little credibility now, or in the future, in the eyes of the proletariat and poor masses of the Mid-East. These exploited workers have the double burden of national rulers as well as imperialist exploiters.

The countdown is on for Arab ruling classes. This is a partial defeat also for the bigger imperialist countries, including the U.S. The main part of the U.S. ruling class is apprehensive about Bush’s go-it-alone policy. They favor a military alliance with UN support, as in 1991. The Bush administration policy has contributed to the loss of confidence in Tony Blair and, after the March 11 attack in Madrid, to Aznar losing the Spanish elections and the new Prime Minister Zapatero withdrawing Spanish troops from Iraq.

Forces like France’s Chirac are waiting for the occupation of Iraq to go under UN supervision that could ensure European countries a bigger share of the oil robbery.

The struggle in Palestine and Iraq is one against occupation and imperialist exploitation. While there is no communist movement able to liberate workers and oppressed masses from capitalist exploitation at this point, the fight is necessary. It is not enough just to speak of solidarity.

We must ask ourselves how to win workers and proletarian masses to communist revolution. Many European workers are indifferent to these struggles against occupation and imperialist exploitation because of Islamic influence among the masses. This is wrong. These struggles are really similar to those among Korean, Argentinian, Ecuadorian, Bolivian and Venezuelan workers who fight governments and the IMF under the wrong leadership. The same is true for Italian, French, U.S. and Spanish workers who struggle under the wrong trade union or political leadership. In fact, this process of proletarians fighting to free themselves from the mis-leadership of local rulers as well as from imperialists is only the first step.

It’s a product of the absence of an international communist organization that PLP

wants to build, but it doesn’t make all these struggles less important. Amid such struggles, workers must make a conscious effort to understand what’s happening around them, to build a growing consciousness and re-build workers’ solidarity and the necessity of a working-class organization.

We must always attack all signs of indifference some workers have about these struggles. In Iraq, for example, there are wide struggles over unemployment, the lack of electricity, repression and occupation. The fight against the occupation is a problem for all of Iraq’s workers.

The struggles against the war in our countries, against racism and torture as well as to win U.S. soldiers to fight against U.S. imperialism (and capitalism in general) are the keys to winning Middle-Eastern workers to fight for communism and to build a mass international PLP to destroy the entire system and the class of bosses who run it.

A RED ITALIAN IMMIGRANT IN GERMANY

Veteran, New PL’ers Built May Day

Our modest collective has participated in many past May Day marches. Usually this organizing involved chartering a bus, selling tickets and bringing a small number of workers to Washington. This year, because of changing political conditions, we organized our first May Day event in our home town. It was a difficult but rewarding experience.

Although as communists, we struggle for change, we found this change in our May Day organizing tough to accept. Marching with the Party in Washington or New York had become a tradition for us. Breaking with tradition is trying, even for revolutionaries. After much discussion we realized we need flexibility to build the Party in a fascist state.

Our collective has been very uneven about commitment to political activism. A few comrades are more aggressive about base-building and on-the-job struggle. Others are more reserved, less able to get involved with people. (Everyone gets fired up about fighting the Klan.)

Recently some of our less active members have shown a desire to increase their commitment to building the Party. The more active ones had a political struggle about how to involve these others. The time being short, we thought relying on newcomers might make us less efficient. But the bosses are always propagandizing about the “inefficiency of collectivism.” As communists it was our duty to give leadership

to our less experienced comrades and develop their growing commitment. Ultimately this communist approach paid off. We organized a May Day celebration that was an inspiration to all who attended.

The dinner was cooked by hospital workers who run a part-time catering business. The working-class food was enjoyed by all. Afterwards there were four speakers. The first three were leaders of reform organizations. The last speaker, a Party member, reviewed the history and tradition of May Day.

At our next meeting, the collective discussed the event. We were pleased with the outcome but were also critical of our political weaknesses. As PLP members we usually attack reformers as misleaders of the working class. But these speakers were friendly to the Party. It seemed inappropriate to attack them after having invited them to address us. Our comrade spoke about revolution and communism but his speech seemed tacked on at the end of the event. We concluded that we should have allowed time to discuss the speeches. This would have enabled us to advance the Party’s ideas on reform and revolution more clearly. Such discussion groups are already part of our plan for May Day 2005.

This new style of work is filled with opportunity and danger. There’s clearly a danger of drifting into reformism, but there’s also the opportunity to bring the Party’s line to many more people. Our collective is confident that PLP’s experience and revolutionary politics will guide us along this exciting new path.

MAY DAY ORGANIZER

Reagan Never ‘Forgot’ The Rich He Served

Ass-kissing reporters are sobbing over the death of Ronald Reagan. We’re supposed to feel bad for this pimp who, until the current Bush, probably caused more suffering than any president in history

Like Bush, his targets were the poor. The rich came out even more ahead than before Reagan took office—and they were doing great off our labor before Raping Ron.

The man who most severely cut benefits for people on welfare and old people developed Alzheimer’s Disease toward the end of his reign of terror.

High-paid Secret Service bodyguards have told how they dumped bushels of leaves into Reagan’s pool, for him to fish out with a net, so he could feel useful. Meanwhile, thousands of poor people were

thrown out on the street into poverty, with no medical benefits to protect them. I was listening to a National Public Radio sob-fest about Reagan, and a white teacher in Boston called in and said her black students — unlike the people she’d been hearing on this show — said they had no good feelings for Reagan. “Another rich white man,” one called him, and she quoted a second student about the use of the word “tragic” concerning Reagan’s death: “He was ninety. Didn’t they know he was eventually going to die?” (Poor people, as victims of capitalism, often have a clearer view of what’s going on than the deluded people who buy the myth of the “two-party democracy.”

Today [6/10] is the next to last day of Reagan’s lying in state. Big deal. He lied in state every day of his eight years as

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

LETTERS CONTINUED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

leader of the capitalist world.

NORTH COUNTRY RED

U.S. Imperialism Has Long History of Torture

It was standing room only at a recent community-group forum on military recruiters in high schools. Amid the speeches given by Brooklyn students, teachers and veterans of the Vietnam and Iraqi wars was one by an Iranian teacher who gave a detailed analysis of torture committed in the name of U.S. Imperialism. She chronicled endless incidents of inhumane acts of torture, from the Middle East to Central America and the United States. One of her main points to the mostly young audience was that this latest torture scandal in Iraq is not an isolated incident. It's a systematic one that has been occurring for generations. Amid all the hoopla about the late president Reagan's "legacy," we should remember it was on his watch that the now incompetent CIA unleashed a lot of this torture on the world. So let's not end the Reagan-bashing just yet. He might be gone but the precedent he set is still butchering workers.

RED COLLEGE STUDENT

Anger Over Sellouts Sparks Red Politics

"Trust me, we won. I don't know how much we'll have to pay for medical when this is all over, but we won." The union president was urging the shop stewards to sell the story to the membership. In the fall, MTA mechanics struck for five weeks over medical benefits. We went back after getting the small stuff and the president's promise that our medical would be "solved" by an arbitrator. The rotten fruits of this union president's "victory" will show up as an extra \$100 deduction in next week's paycheck. For retirees under 65, the cost is a stunning \$246 per month. Many, many workers are angry and complaining.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMRADE

"How can a lower-tier service attendant making \$15 an hour pay \$100 a month out of take-home?" "I heard a story about the grocery workers," said a welder. "The retirees got shafted just like our retirees. I've got to re-think my retirement." Someone asked the union office secretaries who administer the health plan, "Getting a lot of worried phone calls, are you?" She said, not joking, "We're going to need security around here soon." Slowly, through CHALLENGE sales and distribution of news clippings from CHALLENGE and the bosses' papers, workers are realizing capitalism is becoming more unstable. We're making a down payment on this Iraq war by paying more for medical. That's how the bosses force us to help stabilize their rotten system. But even this won't do it. We're in for more and more war. A "quickie" study group occurred when some workers wanted to know about the communist politics of a Party member and what he thought could be done about the medical cuts. Discussing these cuts and the weakness of striking alone, one new worker was attacking communism in a very loudmouthed way. The PL member said, "You seem to have learned a lot about communism when you were in the army's special units. How about I bring an article from a communist paper and we'll all read it and discuss what it says about communism." The other workers agreed and even the new guy had to go along. Several days later the PL'er brought the article "Timkin Lays Off 1,300" from the mid-May CHALLENGE. All were appalled by the hypocrisy of Bush and his friends, the Timkin bosses. The workers don't yet grasp the solution of communism. But one said, "If you were a boss, what would you do?" This makes the point in reverse. The class of bosses have no choice but to lay off workers, exploit cheaper labor and make war for control of profits. But the communist asked, "Does the working class have to continue to suffer so bosses can make higher profits?" An opening has been made for several new CHALLENGE readers, and to develop the point of this question.

82 Million Uninsured While Health Care Bosses' Profits Soar

Approximately one-third of all people in the U.S. under the age of 65 were without health insurance for some part of 2002-2003, according to a study by Families USA. That's 82 million people, two-thirds of whom had no coverage for six months or longer. The study labels this "an enormous epidemic" and attributes 18,000 deaths between ages 18 and 64 to lack of insurance, the sixth leading cause of death in the country, more than AIDS or diabetes. And these deaths don't even count children! Under capitalism, this \$1.6 trillion healthcare industry reaps tens of billions of profits for drug companies, equipment suppliers and hospital conglomerates, among others. Meanwhile, in half the states a family earning the minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour — \$10,700 annually — makes "too much" money to be eligible for Medicaid! Such are the statistics of poverty and death:

- Nearly 43% of black families and nearly 60% of Latin families were uninsured for some part of 2002-2003 because of the racist nature of health care;
- More than 80% of these uninsured were connected to the workforce;
- One-fourth of families earning between \$56,000 and \$74,000 per year were part of this uninsured group;
- Seventy percent of uninsured adults in poor health were unable to afford a doctor;
- Forty percent of these families say to obtain health insurance they would have to cut down on food, rent or utilities.

The study blamed this enormous increase in those without health insurance on rising costs [read profits], unemployment, state budget cuts and bosses passing on the costs of insurance to workers who can't afford them. Add these components and they equal one cause: CAPITALISM. No profit system can provide decent health care for the working class. Only communism can achieve that. ☸

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

From Honduras to Iraq

...US ambassador to Iraq....Negroponte was one of a group of officials involved in Central America....The US policy in Central America in the 80s was essentially that the ends justified the means. Many of those involved in the atrocities in Central America were graduates of the School of the Americas where interrogation techniques of the kind that have come to light in Iraq were taught. When Negroponte was ambassador in Honduras his building in Tegucigalpa became one of the nerve centres of the CIA with in Latin America with a tenfold increase in staff. Now a man who has been accused of not spotting human rights abuses taking place in front of his eyes in Honduras is being sent to Iraq at a time when allegations of human rights abuses are at the heart of the occupation. (GW, 6/17)

Women earn 60% less

Forty years ago, the Census Bureau reports, women made, on average 59 percent of what men made. Now they make 77 percent....such measures substantially overstate what women earn over time . . . Women work far fewer hours than men on average and often drop out of the work force for years at a time. Usually they do so for child-rearing and to tend to the family . . . researches found that the average woman earned \$273,592 over 15 years, compared with \$722,693 for men (in 1999 dollars)....But hours alone do not account for the discrepancy in pay over time. The economists' analysis turns up continuing evidence of gender segregation. A far higher proportion of females have had jobs that pay at the bottom of the income scale. . . .

Women also often take low-paying temporary or part-time jobs that provide few benefits so they can be home for the family. This in turn creates a labor pool that business can consistently exploit, encouraging companies to orient their operations to use such low-paid workers rather than create better jobs. (NYT, 6/10)

System ruins China health

In the past 25 years the "Chinese miracle" has made many people richer but also made them sicker and less able to afford medical care once provided free. Tuberculosis and bilharzia are making a comeback, HIV cases are rising at the rate of 30% per year and Sars has emerged as a new threat....Once one of the proudest boasts of the communist party, the healthcare system is in tatters. The abolition of rural cooperatives in 1978 left 800 million peasants without health insurance.... In the battle against tuberculosis,...China is now the only country in the western Pacific region where families have to pay for childhood immunization....WHO and foreign governments are now telling Beijing that its free market reforms have gone too far.(GW, 6/17)

If Nazis guilty, so is US

Under the doctrine of command responsibility, officials can be held accountable for war crimes committed by their subordinates even if they did not order them — so long as they had control over the perpetrators, had reason to know about the crimes, and did not stop them or punish the criminals. This

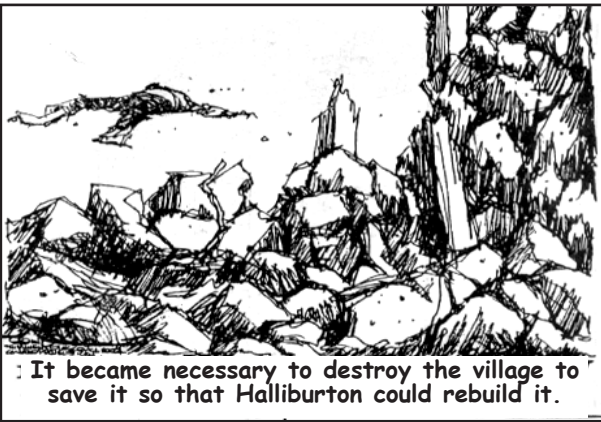
doctrine is the product of an American initiative. Devised by Allied judges and prosecutors at the Nuremberg tribunals, it was a means to impute responsibility for wartime atrocities to Nazi leaders, who often communicated indirectly and avoided leaving a paper trail....If this is now the standard in international law — which the United States and the United Nations are applying to rogue leaders like the former Yugoslavian president, Slobodan Milosevic — what does it mean for Washington?(NYT,6/10)

Torching Afghan women

Mallali was burned all over, it took her 24 hours to die. In a suicide note to her parents she explained why she had chosen such a horrific end. "Her husband's family was treating her like an animal," said Mr Shah, tears trickling down her cheeks....She found it hard to live like a slave. Several hundred young women are burning themselves to death every year in western Afghanistan...."There are many more pressures on young Afghan women today because they have learned what freedom is....Girls know they should have rights, and they are prepared to burn themselves to show society that they do not have them yet."....Despite an increase in the number of girls in school, most Afghan women enjoy no more rights than they did under the Taliban. Most of the country is not controlled by the government but by warlords as misogynistic as the Taliban. (GW, 6/17)

Motive in Iraq: Profits

Al Qaeda is stronger than ever and poised to strike in spectacular fashion....That is not just the opinion of pessimistic liberals in Washington think tanks. That is the view from the heart of US intelligence....Anonymous (as he has to describe himself)....He argues that al-Qaida targets America for what it does, not what it is. Bin Laden finds support around the Muslim world because of US support for Israel, the US military presence on the Arabian peninsula and in other Islamic countries, and US support for corrupt westernised regimes in those countries...." In that light, the Bush Administration has only made America's position worse by the invasion of Iraq, which Anonymous describes as . . . "a foe who posed no immediate threat but whose defeat did offer economic advantage". (GW, 6/17)



: It became necessary to destroy the village to save it so that Halliburton could rebuild it.

Ford, GM, IBM Armed Hitler Before and During WW2

PART 1

The biggest U.S. corporations and banks helped Hitler and the Nazis wage World War II.

While Bush was “honoring” the 10,000 U.S. and Allied soldiers who died on D-Day, the fact is that his granddaddy, Prescott Bush, and other U.S. bosses made huge profits producing for the Nazi war machine. The planes, trucks and tanks manufactured by Ford and GM plants in Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe, the oil supplied by Rockefeller’s Standard Oil (now Exxon), the synthetics supplied by DuPont, the technology supplied by IBM and ITT, all contributed to Hitler’s invasion of Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Soviet Union, Western Europe and North Africa, the rocket bombing of Britain and the Holocaust.

The main factor that upset this U.S. corporate/Nazi alliance, seeking decades of super-profits in a fascist Europe, was the communist-led Soviet Union.

U.S. bosses had two reasons for supporting Hitler: (1) to destroy the USSR and its example to the world’s workers of an attempt to establish a profit-free society; and (2) to reap huge profits from supplying his Nazi war machine, guaranteed by the fascist smashing of unions, strikes and left-wing organizations. But inter-imperialist rivalry helped spoil all that. The main section of the U.S. ruling class ultimately realized that the Nazis were looking to grab the whole imperialist pie, threatening U.S. imperialism itself. That, plus the fact that the Soviets were later chasing the Nazi army westward towards Berlin, impelled U.S. bosses to join all out in the fight against the fascist Axis, mainly being waged by the Soviet Red Army (see CHALLENGE, 6/24).

U.S. BOSSES SET UP SHOP IN NAZI GERMANY

Many of the largest U.S. corporations, banks and Wall Street investment houses were already prospering in Germany before World War II erupted in Europe (see box). Ford had its plant in Cologne; GM took over the country’s largest auto manufacturer, Opel; Standard Oil was linked to I.G. Farben; IBM established its Dehomag branch; the Union Bank, managed by Prescott Bush, George W.’s grandfather and an eager supporter of Hitler, was tied to the German steel baron Thyssen who financed the Fascists’ rise to power. It was Prescott’s Nazi profits that helped his son, Bush, Sr., launch his oil business.

Once Hitler seized power in 1933 with the backing of Germany’s biggest bosses, it was open season for profit-making. This had occurred amid the worldwide Depression, with production and profits down. Street battles between the Nazis and Communists were common. The



bosses feared a “red” revolution similar to the one in the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, the KPD (Communist Party of Germany), although very militant, mainly pursued electoral politics (“after Hitler, Thaelmann” — head of the KPD)). The KPD’s path shortly became the line of the international communist movement (the Comintern): uniting with “lesser evil” capitalist forces (the “United Front Against Fascism”), such as the SPD (Social-Democrats) which ran the trade unions. But the SPD was more anti-communist than anti-Nazi.

The Nazis had no illusions in bourgeois democracy and used the Brown Shirts and the Gestapo to smash strikes and all opposition to fascist capitalism. Thousands of communists, trade unionists and even social-democrats were thrown into the first concentration camps, the precursors of the Holocaust. With a combination of repression, patriotism and crude anti-Semitism, many workers accepted, fought and died for the Führer. Workers “were little more than serfs, forbidden not only to strike but to change jobs,” driven “to work harder [and] faster.” Now all capitalists could cut wages mercilessly, including Ford, GM, Coca Cola and the rest.

As the Nazis geared for war, production and profits rose accordingly. The Ford plant’s annual profits increased 20-fold from 1935 to 1939. By 1938, GM’s Opel plant was netting \$14 million annually. From 1933 to 1939, IBM’s branch profit went up 400%. As Germany re-armed, all these U.S. corporate branches converted to war production.

The engines in the trucks captured by the D-Day invaders in 1944 were made by Ford and GM. Some partly-assembled Ford vehicles were shipped from Dearborn, Mich. to its plant in Cologne and completed just in time to be used in Hitler’s invasion of Czechoslovakia. Ford also supplied the Nazis with strategic raw materials, millions of pounds of rubber and copper. Texaco and Standard Oil helped Hitler build up his oil stockpile, supplying 94% of

German imports by September 1941 (Germany had no oil). Oil was essential to the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. Albert Speer, Hitler’s armament minister, said that without synthetic fuels from U.S. firms, the Germans “would never have considered invading Poland.” (Michael Dobbs, International Herald-Tribune, 12/3/98) GM’s main factory in Russelsheim assembled the JU-88, the workhorse of Germany’s bomber fleet. At one point GM and Ford together accounted for half of the Nazis’ entire production of tanks. GM’s Opel plant produced the all-wheel drive trucks particularly useful in the mud of the Eastern Front and in the North African desert. Ford set up a non-vehicle factory near its Cologne plant that was involved in developing turbines for the infamous V-2 rockets that devastated London.

The German concept of the “Blitzkrieg” was used to swiftly conquer Poland, the Balkans, France, Holland, Belgium and Norway. This kind of warfare involved perfectly synchronized attacks by land and air, requiring highly sophisticated communications equipment. ITT supplied most of that apparatus. IBM’s Dehomag plant sold them state-of-the-art technology which, according to Edwin Black (“IBM and the Holocaust,” p. 208), enabled the Nazis to “achieve scale, velocity [and] efficiency.” IBM, he concluded, “put the ‘blitz’ in the ‘krieg’ for Nazi Germany.”

Then, as the Nazis conquered country after country, the U.S. companies rode their coattails. Ford and Coca-Cola expanded into these occupied areas. Ford’s plants in France, Holland and Belgium became extremely profitable based on its unconditional collaboration with the Nazis. Ford built a tank factory in France’s Algerian colony which supplied General Rommel’s Africa Corps on his advance into Egypt.

No wonder GM chairman William Knudson and ITT boss Sosthenes Behn were enchanted with Hitler. No wonder Hitler gave prestigious awards to Henry Ford, IBM’s Thomas Watson and GM’s export director James Mooney.

(Next issue: Soviets put crimp in Nazi/Western goals; U.S. Bosses play both sides after Pearl Harbor; U.S. technology used in the Holocaust.)

Sources: “Profits Uber Alles,” American Corporations and Hitler by Jacques Pauwels, 6/8/04; <<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/PAW406A.html>>

Charles Higham: “Trading With the Enemy,” 1983; Ralph Levering: “American Opinion and the Russian Alliance,” 1976; Edwin Black: “IBM and the Holocaust,” 2001; Billstein, Fings, Kugler and Levis: “Working for the Enemy: Ford, GM and Forced Labor during the Second World War,” 2000; Silverstein: “Ford and the Fuhrer”

Privatizing Water Kills As Capitalists Thirst For Profits

Without question, water is one of the most important resources for human life. Without a constant supply of clean water, humans will quickly die. Water is also one of the most abundant resources in the world. Yet according to the UN’s World Commission on Water for the 21st Century, three billion people — around half the world’s population — have no access to clean water.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 1.1 billion don’t have dependable access to water at all. At any given time patients suffering from water-borne diseases occupy approximately half of the world’s hospital beds. In the past 10 years, diarrhea, contracted from drinking contaminated water, has killed more children than all the people lost to armed conflict since World War II — about one every ten seconds.

While the figures are probably even higher, these statistics paint a picture of modern capitalism’s murderous reality. In almost every country, water is not

considered a fundamental human right, but rather a commodity that the ruling class owns. They sell this commodity and reap tremendous profits. Maude Barlow, director of the liberal environmentalist Blue Planet Project, estimates that water and sanitation service is a two-trillion dollar global industry! Many of the world’s poorest people have barely been able to subsist on well water or subsidized state-owned water utilities. But recent developments in the global economy have dramatically changed poor people’s access to even the most basic water sources.

Worldwide, multi-national corporations are taking advantage of the World Trade Organization’s decision to allow corporations to buy public utilities and social services. (See General Agreement on Trades and Services (GATS) in the 1994 Uruguay Round Agreement.) Large U.S., British, German and French corporations are rushing to buy municipal water utilities. These corporations create so-called “Private-Public Partnerships”

that guarantee them tremendous profit on the backs of workers, peasants and indigenous communities. These “Partnerships” have increased water rates by as much as 400% in some areas, converted community wells into coin-operated pumps, and shut off water service for enormous percentages of poor communities who are unable to pay the increased rates. The results of water privatization have been devastating.

Those who can’t pay for privatized water are forced to drink contaminated water from canals and stagnant ponds. In many developing countries, women must walk an average of over 7 km. (4 miles) to collect water, and they must carry an average of 20 kg. (44 lbs.) back home. The WHO reports massive outbreaks of cholera and typhoid because of water privatization in Central America and Sub-Saharan Africa. Cholera is a potentially life-threatening disease contracted from bacteria-contaminated drinking water. Someone with cholera who doesn’t get the proper anti-biotics

and rehydration medicine will die in four days. The immune system of infants, young children and elderly people are least capable of fighting water-borne diseases. Therefore they die in larger numbers during a crisis. Without expensive technology it is difficult to sanitize water. Poor people with access to forests must cut down trees to build fires to boil the water. This leads to deforestation in poor communities as well as increased lung diseases for people (mostly women) who must breathe in the smoke from the fires.

(This series will analyze what communists mean when we say we need a world based upon need, not profit. The next two articles will review which institutions help convert water into a commodity and how the world capitalist system necessitates the commodification of water.)